

## ARTS IN EDUCATION

### Workshop explores “Meaningful Making”

Zootown Arts and The University of Montana present “Meaningful Making: New Art Education Styles for Montana Art Educators,” April 11-12 on the UM campus.

The free public lecture and workshop, featuring Olivia Gude, professor of art education at the University of Illinois at Chicago, offers eight renewal credits through Missoula Public Schools.

Gude’s research focuses on identifying new paradigms for structuring visual art curricula and will enhance the creative potential of Montana’s art educators, thus revitalizing art education in both community and K-12 settings.

The conference will appeal to the general public, community art educators, K-12 Montana teachers statewide, art education students from Montana university institutions, and Montana Art Education Association members.

The conference has two components:

• **“Meaningful Making: Why We Need New School Art Styles,” a public lecture 6-7 p.m. April 11 in UM Social Sciences, room 356.**

Analyze the hidden curriculum of old stand-by school art projects and consider relinquishing them in favor of new art styles that teach meaningful making while fostering a contemporary understanding of art skills.

“You have to know the rules before you break them” is not a credible argument for maintaining the current curriculum. An unfortunate consequence of structuring art curriculum on academic techniques and de-contextualized formalist vocabulary is that students learn incorrect ideas about how meaning is generated.

Instead of seeing meaning as the result of the play of signifiers in cultural contexts, students tend to learn that there is a simple and direct (not culturally determined) correspondence between form and meaning.

This lecture will include many practical suggestions for transforming curriculum, including contemporary methods for teaching color, expressionistic drawing and painting, narrative art and self-portraits, as well as projects that introduce students to important concepts of visual culture theory.

• **“Drawing ‘Dirty’ Pictures: Post-Neat Art As a Curriculum Theme,” a workshop for K-12 and community educators 9 a.m.-noon and 1-4 p.m. April 12 in the School of Visual Art’s Drawing Studio, room 401.**

Embrace mess as method and as metaphor. Overcome fear of the blank paper. Eschew neatness and embrace the filthy, the abject and the raw aspects of artmaking.

Analyze the thematics of dirt in contemporary culture, ranging from the merely messy to life-threatening toxicity. Encounter a range of artists who will stimulate, irritate and inspire you and your students.

Incorporate projects in your curriculum that create rich, layered images that explore the depth and complexity of life in postmodern times. Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to become unafraid to get down and dirty with your art.

To reserve your spot, contact Jennifer Combe at [jennifer.combe@mso.umt.edu](mailto:jennifer.combe@mso.umt.edu). Include your name, profession, school affiliation, phone number and e-mail address. Space is limited, and room and board are not offered.



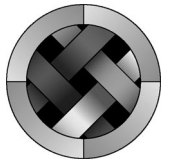
Olivia Gude

#### About the instructor:

Professor Olivia Gude has presented at several universities, including the California College of Arts, the University of Texas Austin and Rhode Island School of Design, and has conducted workshops at museums around the nation, including the Whitney Museum, the Walker Art Center and Chicago’s Art Institute and Museum of Contemporary Art.

She has conducted many workshops with art teachers to encourage the collaborative creation of new curriculum models in urban and suburban settings, and has been a keynote speaker for state art education conferences in Colorado, Illinois, Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Utah and Wisconsin, as well as art education organizations in Canada. In 2011, she presented the keynote for the Korean Society for Education through Art in Seoul.

This project is funded by the Montana Arts Council, the UM Office of the Provost, and the Jim and Jane Dew Visiting Artist Fund with the UM School of Art.



7

### T.E.A. grants available

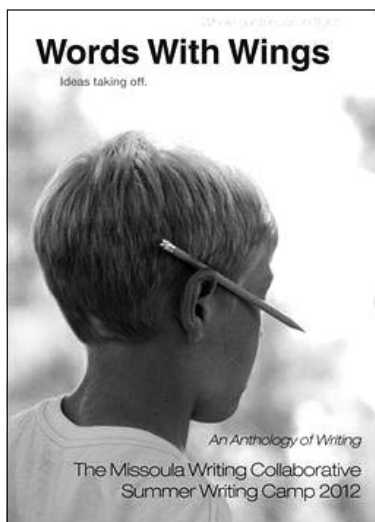
The Montana Arts Council continues to offer Teacher Exploration of the Arts (TEA) grants. This program is for elementary classroom teachers or K-8 teachers with an elementary endorsement, who are asked to teach visual art or music and do not have a background in that subject, and wish to work one-on-one with a professional working artist in order to develop skills in a particular artistic discipline.

Disciplines include dance, literary arts, media arts, music, theatre and visual arts.

For more information, go to [art.mt.gov/schools/schools\\_tea.asp](http://art.mt.gov/schools/schools_tea.asp).

### Words With Wings now available

Young writers from The Missoula Writing Collaborative’s Words With Wings summer writing camp shared poetry and stories from the newly published 2012 *Words With Wings* anthology of student writing during a First Friday book launch, Feb. 1 at Fact and Fiction in Missoula. Student poets and authors, ages 7-14, read works inspired by art, nature, history and their own life experiences.



Words With Wings is now in its eighth year and has expanded to a full day. This intensive writing camp gives kids in MWC school residencies (and beyond) a chance to exercise their creative writing skills year round.

This year’s camp runs July 8-12 and 15-19 on The University of Montana campus; for more information, call 406-549-3348 or visit [www.missoulawritingcollaborative.org](http://www.missoulawritingcollaborative.org)

“Whispering Wood”  
(from this year’s anthology)  
The branches  
hang low and welcome you  
up  
to tell the trees  
your deepest  
darkest  
secrets.  
They welcome you  
up  
to let your pencil  
touch your paper  
and to let you  
know that you are special in  
Whispering Wood.

— Sorine B., age 7

## VSA Montana director announces retirement plans

Alayne Dolson, the long-time executive director of VSA Montana, has announced that she plans to retire, effective Sept. 30, 2013.

Dolson assumed the directorship of Very Special Arts Montana, as it was then known, in July 1994 at Missoula’s Front Street Theatre. Thus began a very close and mutually beneficial relationship with Missoula Children’s Theatre that continues into the present. The VSA office is now located on the third floor of the MCT building on Broadway.

It’s a fruitful collaboration. “We work to ensure that children with disabilities have opportunities to learn and grow through theatre camps, after school and in the summer,” says Dolson.

VSA has also worked with MCT to present two adapted performances of musical productions that accommodate the needs of people with sensory issues, particularly those on the autism spectrum, and VSA annually presents its spring Cabaret Show at MCT.

In 1994, Very Special Arts had three on-going programs: a visual arts program with Butte Sheltered Workshop, the New Visions Dance program with Karen Kaufmann at The University of Montana’s Dance Department, and a visual arts class for adults with traumatic brain injury.

The organization also had received funding from the Montana Cultural Trust to develop site programs in the state, “and so the driving began,” recalls Dolson.

A partnership with the Custer County Art and Heritage Center began with funding to support visual arts for residents in Miles City Convalescent Centers and at the VA hospital. It has since grown to include after-school programs for children, students served in rural areas or home schooled, and adults with disabilities from the Eastern Montana Mental Health Center and Eastern Montana Industries.

VSA is also offering some visual arts programs in Sidney, thanks to a relationship with Richland Opportunities, Inc. “Partnerships have been the key to building VSA programming throughout the state,” says Dolson.

In 1994, Dolson worked half time for VSA and also served as the executive director of Young Audiences of Western Montana. Working for both organizations helped Dolson begin to identify community needs and develop relationships that led to development of programming that better served populations with disabilities, many in inclusive settings in schools, museums and cultural centers.

Today VSA has on-going programs (ranging from 10 weeks to year-round terms) in 12-15 counties in the state and, additionally, provides professional develop-



Alayne Dolson

ment for teachers, paraprofessionals and teaching artists in daylong institutes and at the annual MEA-MFT Conference held each October.

Program development was also aided by a work contract with the Montana Arts Council to visit cultural centers throughout the state to assess compliance with ADA requirements. This work gave VSA an opportunity to build relationships with many arts organizations that were interested in

providing better services to people with disabilities.

Dolson has also served on many boards in Missoula, in Montana, and nationally on the VSA Advisory Council from 1995-2001. She is currently serving on the VSA affiliate council, as the organization transitions into a new relationship with the VSA Arts Education and Accessibility Department of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

And what will retirement bring? “Continued advocacy to make sure that people with disabilities have access to the arts as learners, as participants, and as audience members,” she vows.